

KATARZIS

YEAR OF RESISTANCE



*The future is unwritten. The pen is in our hands.
It depends on us to create a better world,
based on freedom and equality,
mutual aid and solidarity!*

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Hello everybody. This is a special edition of "Katarzis" zine, dedicated to all our friends around the world. We have put out 6 issues of "Katarzis" in Bulgarian and now decided to make one English version. This is an anarchist journal for 2007 with some texts and news from actions we did and took part in. Our passion for free living gave birth to this zine 2 years ago. We have wanted to share our ideas for a better world based on freedom, equality, mutual aid and solidarity, so this is how everything started. We are not great writers, nor philosophers full of theories. We keep on writing but also try to walk our talk and do everything we can to live the Dream in our daily lives. We fight for total liberation of ourselves and our world through creative self-expression and self-determination. We try to destroy capitalism, hierarchy, morality, ideology, all the kind of prejudice and above all we try to transform the life into a joyous, carefree game, played for the highest of stakes.



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Live Free

Look around. What do you see? You are surrounded by busy and anxious people, never thinking about the point of their existence. They may seem alive, but they are not. Their heart beating is not making them really alive. They are much more like machines, like robots, programmed by their masters always to serve and submit. This programming has started since their childhood when the free kid spirit was killed. The school with its authoritarian structure has taught them always to follow orders and be silent. Not to say we are against education, but we are for free schools, where the kids could learn and develop the things they are interested in. "Go to school, get a job" – have you heard this before? That's what they always tell us. You will find a well-paid job if you graduate the university. But how many people enjoy their jobs? Yes, there are a couple exceptions, but the majority doesn't have this luck. Most of the people need to work in order to survive. And the working process steals all the free time and energy from these individuals. They spend most of their time at work; in the bus or in their cars travelling to work; at home resting and recovering from/for work. The people don't have much time to think for other things except work. This is what the masters want – not to allow the people to think, because otherwise they could get some dangerous ideas and stop following their programmed lives. We live in a capitalist society and need money for some things, but we buy most of the things not because we need them, but because someone has persuaded us that we do. The television is very powerful weapon and the ads you see are bullets shot right in your brain. Have you ever thought what you really need to survive? It's not much. Your basic needs are: food, shelter, clothes and transportation. You could spend less for food if you go vegan/vegetarian; plant a garden and grow your own food or just go dumpster diving. You could get free housing if squatting is possible in your area, if not – just live collectively with friends. To get cheap clothes go to secondhand shops. Other good idea to get clothes and other things is to start organizing free markets where the people share things they don't need instead of throwing them on the trash. The cheapest transport is the bike. It's eco and it's fun. If you travel long distances – go hitchhiking. So these were few examples of survival. But we don't want mere survival – we want a real life, full of joy and happiness. Our passion, creativity, and art is what make us feel alive. We sing, we dance, we make love under the stars and nothing could stop us from getting what we want. We are the wind of change, the clog in the machine, the flower tearing apart the asphalt, the virus destroying this programmed system. We are dreamers, idealists, lunatics, pauper kings and bandit queens, we fight for our lives and will stay true till death.



Really, Really Free Market



Why the 'Free Market Works

The 'Free Market model has several virtues to recommend it for anarchists hoping to build local infrastructures and momentum. First, like Critical Mass or Food Not Bombs, it lends itself to a decentralized approach: so long as the idea is well-distributed, neither hierarchy nor central coordination is necessary to organize a 'Free Market. This makes the 'Free Market model helpful for those hoping to cultivate personal responsibility and autonomous initiative in their communities; it also means that, should the 'Free Market in your town run into trouble with the authorities, they won't be able to shut it down by simply targeting the leaders.

The 'Free Market model, conversely, can be comfortable for almost anyone. In a consumer society in which shopping is the common denominator of all social activity, everyone feels entitled to pick through items at a yard sale—and the fact that they're free just sweetens the deal. Middle class people, of course, need more than anything else to get rid of things: their houses are all so overfilled with unused commodities that the opportunity to do something with them is a godsend. This works out nicely for the rest of us! And thanks to wasteful mass-production, even the poorest of the poor usually have access to a surplus of some kind. Being able to give something to someone who needs it is even more fulfilling than getting things for free: centuries of capitalist conditioning have not succeeded in grinding out our instinctive propensity for mutual aid.

The 'Free Market is not just a means of getting stuff without paying. Long-term participation in 'Free Markets dispels the materialist programming that makes people covet useless items by denying access to them, and demonstrates just

how possible and fulfilling the anarchist alternative is. It also presents a point of departure for further struggles: if this is what we can do with the scanty resources we're able to get our hands on now, what could we do with the entire wealth of this society?

Throw Your Own 'Free Market!

It's easy to organize a Really Really Free Market. Every town should have one; big cities should have one for every district. Once you get a regular 'Free Market off the ground, it should basically run itself. The challenge is to start things off with enough energy that everyone can see the project's potential, while making sure everyone who gets involved feels an equal sense of ownership and investment.

The first essential element of a good 'Free Market is location. Your 'Free Market should take place on neutral ground—that is, in an area everyone feels an equal claim to or ownership of—so no one will feel more or less comfortable than anyone else. For similar reasons, your location should be a central, visible area. If you can use a space where major public events happen or where a wide range of people are already accustomed to gathering, it will dramatically increase your chances of success.

The next step is to advertise. Sure, you should post fliers and send out emails to every listserv you can possibly think of, but that's only the beginning. You can take handbills around and give them out at bus stops, public events, in neighborhoods and apartment complexes; you should also see if local radio stations will run Public Service Announcements for you, or if local papers can run a listing or even a story on your event. If you come into conflict with city officials or anyone else, treat it as another opportunity to solicit media coverage.

Don't stop at approaching the official representatives of a group—talk to the rank and file so your outreach efforts don't depend on authority figures but extend directly to the people you want to invite. Forget about government officials—they're too tied up in red tape to think about your event as anything but a headache—but do contact the workers at homeless shelters, interfaith councils, and other social support institutions: they're probably so overwhelmed and under-equipped that they'll be thrilled to direct people to your 'Free Market for additional resources.

Make all your fliers, signs, and announcements bilingual, or else produce them in different languages for different contexts. At every 'Free Market, put out a sign-up list so people who want to receive news of the next one or coordinate with other organizers can leave their contact information.

Next, brainstorm all the possible sources of things to give away. The more you bring to the 'Free Market yourself, the more excited others will be about the event, and the more they will expect from themselves as participants. Go through your closets, and encourage everyone you know to do the same. Of course you can dumpster bread and vegetables—but is it possible employees might slip you a little on the side, too? Visit colleges at the end of each semester, corporations that are going out of business, and wealthy neighborhoods where they leave perfectly good items sitting out on the curb.

Get all your friends together the night before to cook a nutritious meal and a few hundred delicious cookies.

Don't stop at gathering objects—a good 'Free Market is about people interacting with each other, not just taking and leaving things. Organize games, musical improvisations, and other participatory activities that can incorporate chance passers-by. Set up displays and dioramas for the shy but inquisitive. Solicit participants person by person. As a rule of thumb, one personal invitation is worth a hundred fliers. Invite an accomplished storyteller, a hairstylist, a popular folk musician, a collective of spoken word artists, a specialist in therapeutic massage, a portrait painter, a bicycle mechanic, an automobile mechanic, and everyone else can you think of or run into. Offer to help provide whatever resources they need.

Consider what services others at the 'Market may need, as well. You could have someone with a truck available to make deliveries, or someone organizing children's activities in case a lot of overburdened parents show up. In some situations, you should have a team designated in advance to deal with police, media, or other troublemakers.

Coordinate with other groups to broaden the scope of your 'Free Market. A dance troupe is coming to your town for the weekend; can they put in an appearance? How about a barbershop quartet, a team of champion skateboarders, a wholistic health care provider, a symphony orchestra? You're not just keeping old clothes and stale bagels in circulation, you're introducing an entirely different economic system that can provide as much diversity as capitalism, if not more! Make sure that comes across at every 'Free Market.

Finally, make sure you have a plan for what to do with the leftovers! The local thrift shop or goodwill may be thrilled to get a big shipment in from you, or it may not be what they want at all, in which case you'll have to either have a place to store it all for the next 'Free Market or a means of disposing of it. Clean up the site of your 'Free Market meticulously; you'll benefit from having a reputation for being responsible in this regard.

Once your 'Free Markets have taken off, you can move on to other Really Really Free programs: free movie showings and other entertainment events, free education projects, free housing occupations! The sky's the limit once people have a taste of real freedom.

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Free Festivals

Razgrad 31.03.2007



A Free Festival took place for second time in the small Bulgarian town Razgrad on the 31.03.2007. The place of the event was the well-known town park. The fest started at 15:00 and the weather was cloudy and darkly. But in spite of the high cloudiness and the fear of rain, after many spells, magic tricks and ritual dancing we had luck and it didn't rain that day. The idea of this festival fired a lot of people with enthusiasm and little by little they started to gather. There were even people from other towns, Everyone was sharing things that he/she didn't need and was finding something for himself/herself from the stuff that the others had brought. The free market was full of t-shirts, sweatshirts, pants, caps, shies, toys, books, music CDs and a lot of eco, vegan and anarchistic leaflets and zines. There was also free vegetarian kitchen with various delicious meals like rice with vegetables, baked cabbage with soy pieces, potato salad, cabbage salad, cakes, buns and other desserts. The fest was going very well under the sound of ska, punk, hard core and hip hop music. There was organized a net foot bag game. There were also juggling clowns, flying skateboarders, in-liner, BMXers and a couple of musicians playing acoustic songs. The fest was full of high spirits and all the people had great time together like a big and united family. There were some clothes left on the free market so we decided to give them to the old man's home for people with mental problems. The fest ended at about 23:00 and we think that everyone was satisfied and happy about it. We hope to continue organizing this Free Festival and to turn it into a regular event. It is our alternative vision to this brutal and greedy capitalist system. Everyone has some resources, that could share – something that is needed by someone else. Self-organizing, mutual aid, sharing resources, ideas and experience are exactly the most important things to build a healthy and united community.

The mutual aid is the anarchy's heart, so who shares it – wins!

Razgrad 22.09.2007

The third Free Festival was organized in Razgrad. On the 22.09.2007 the town park was full of young people, enthusiastic by the idea to share the things they don't need, instead of throwing them away. We got luck that this day was sunny. The fest started at 15:00 and more than 60-70 people came. There were even some people from other towns and 4 friends from abroad. The free market was offering various kind of clothes, music CDs, patches, magazines, stickers, vegan, ecological and anarchistic leaflets. There was big interest for the last issue of the anarchist zine Katarzis and for the new DIY zine called "Hliab &

Liutenitza". Our friends from the Bucharest anarchist group (www.fight-back.tk) and a lady from the German anarchy-feminist collective Erinyen brought a distro with many CDs, zines, patches, badges, bracelets and ear-rings. There was always a free vegetarian kitchen. This time the menu was: vegetarian musaka with soy, potato salad, baked potatoes, baked desserts and fruits. The high spirits were supported by some good punk, hardcore, ska tunes. The traditional net foot bag contest was organized and 8 teams took part in it. After the game there was a yoga workshop and around 30 people formed a big circle to stretch and do some exercises. When the sun went down the weather became colder and some of the people decided to warm up practicing their ska/punk dancing moves. The festival finished at around 21:30. There were some clothes left and we gave them to the old man's home for people with mental problems. We are very happy that the idea of this festival finds fertile land in our town and more people get to know the anarchist alternatives which are contra to today's capitalist and consuming society.

Free Festivals in Sofia

The idea of the 'Free Market' has also spread in the city of Sofia. After 2 successful Free Festivals in Razgrad the anarchist group "AnarchoSaprotiva", which some of us are part of and close connected to, put this initiative into an action. We did extensive advertisement about the event, handed out a lot of flyers and post bulletins in many websites. And finally the long awaited day – 03.06.2007 – came. More than 50 people brought a lot of useful things they don't need. Everyone was sharing and having fun. We were playing football, playing acoustic music and dancing on the green grass in the park. The people passing by the alley were looking in surprise what was happening. Many of them came and when they understood about this initiative got really enthusiastic. The more people were gathering the more weather was getting worse and 2-3 hours after the beginning rain started to pour. We hid under the trees until the rain stopped and got the leftover things to store them for the next festival. After a summer break and a lot of eco defense actions we decided to throw another Free Festival on the 16.09.2007. It was sunny Sunday and there were no sings of rain or something. The place of the event was the same – The South Park. It seems that the idea has accepted very well because this time more people came. We also did a list where everyone could sign an email for information about upcoming events. There were again huge free market with clothes, shoes, literature, music CDs and tape, an improvised vegetarian kitchen. There were a yoga workshop, a photo place where the people took photos with a cultural jammed model of Donald duck remade like a pirate holding a Molotov. We played some acoustic punk songs rioting against the system and organized games for the kids. Everything finished successfully and we have idea to organize one more festival till the end of the year.



Trees, Not Concrete

The municipality of Razgrad has started to log all the poplar trees in town no matter their age. As you know poplar trees become dangerous when they get old and dry, but in this case there were a lot of healthy trees cut as well. We decided to do an action to oppose this sick logging and to express our opinion about it. We cut down 1 billboard banner late at the night of 06.04.2007 and used the clear (back) side of it to create an ecological banner that says:

"ENOUGH LOGGING!

WE WANT TREES, NOT CONCRETE!

NO COMPROMISE IN DEFENSE OF EARTH!"

So we went to the central square which is situated in front of the municipality and dropped the banner on the next day at noon. There were a lot of people at the square and most of them said they are on our side and support our activity, never mind the mask we had put on. Two hours after that some people from the municipality took down the banner but they didn't get it and just put it down on the ground. So we managed to get the banner back and drop it during the night from a construction side near the biggest hotel in town. We also shot a video of the action which you could see here: www.myspace.com/sanitymonk



Mayday in Razgrad

The anarchist community of Razgrad did a couple of actions for Mayday. These are actually the first anarchist actions about the 1st of May in this town. We got together the night before Mayday and did a massive stenciling through the whole town. The stencils had messages that "The 1st of May is a day for resistance" and "Capitalism kills the Earth". This day has started to be celebrated as a holiday during the Socialist regime and the truth about it has been hidden from the people. So we decided to make a leaflet with the story of Mayday (the protests in Chicago for 8 hour working day, the events at Haymarket square and the crazy trail and execution of the anarchists of Chicago). We went through the center and the town park in the late afternoon on May the 1st and handed out about 100 leaflets. We also organized a video screening of the Canadian documentary "The Take", which took place on the next day. This movie shows the resistance of Argentinean workers after the economic collapse in 2001, when they start to occupy the closed factories and self-govern themselves without bosses. There were about 40 people present at the screening and everyone liked the movie. We also had put an info table with Mayday leaflets, the last two issues of our zine "Katarzis", some issues of "AbolishingBB" and some newsletters for the upcoming protests against the G8 summit in Germany this summer. We hope that more and more people are gonna awake from the lethargic dream they are in and will take back their lives in their own hands, so we could all fight to create a better world.





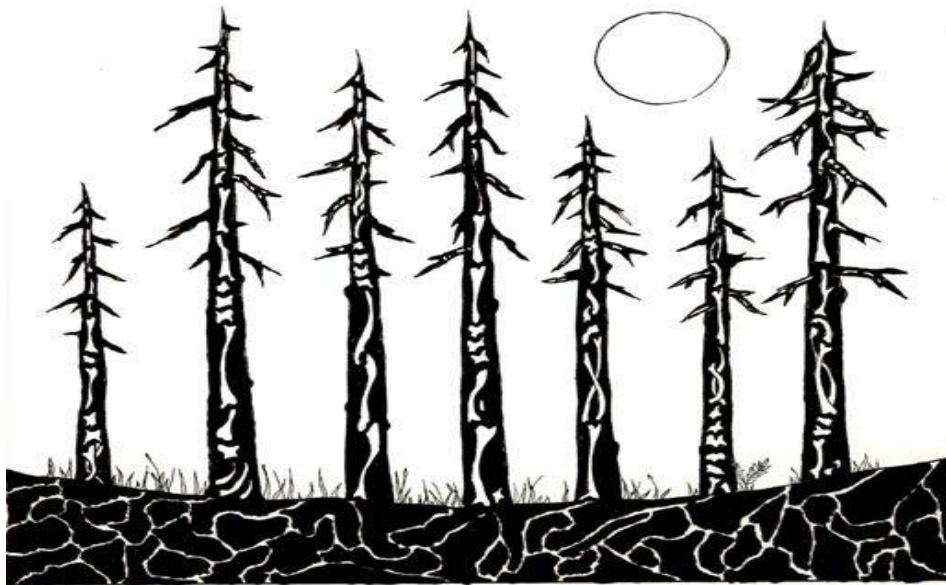
Infocenter "Ecotopia"

We are happy to announce you, that after a long searching of a place, we finally found it and established an alternative youth information center in Razgrad. The infocenter is called "ECOTOPIA" and it is the first counterculture youth house in Bulgaria. It has free library and a reading room where you can find materials about the environmentalism, the struggle of the oppressed people and communities around the world, animal rights, vegetarianism, anarchofeminism, anarcho-punk etc. The infocenter now works once a week – every Wednesday from 15:00 to 17:00. We

have been starting doing film screenings there and plan to organize discussions, presentations, exhibitions, concerts and other activities for the future. Everyone who is interested, has fresh ideas, wants to learn or to help in some way – get in touch.

The opening of the infocenter was on 04.07.2007. There was big interest and the place was full of more than 50 people. There was a film projection of the "An Inconvenient Truth", which present 1 serious ecological problem – the global warming. The night finished with a hip hop concert of the band Rhymes From Ra. The rappers gave their best and in spite of the bad sound system they managed to heat the atmosphere to max level. We hope to bring a positive change by this project, to create a strong community of awaken and active people ready to fight for a better future.

If there's anyone who can help us with some propaganda materials, books, DVDs or everything for the infoshop you can write us at **infocenter.ecotopia@gmail.com**



Who is Crazy?

On the 17th of February there was a carnival-protest called "Who is crazy?". The people gathered to protest against the destruction of the environment and against the decision to extremely low percentage territories, which are going to be in the "Natura 2000" network and therefore will have at least a little bit of protection against the greedy capitalist interests. Once more the Rulers showed that for them their own personal gains, which they will have with building up and the destruction of our home Earth, are more important and the people who are struggling for the protection for our valuable nature were presented as they were crazy. The protesters gathered at 15:30 in front of NDK(National Cultural Palace) in Sofia. Lots of the people were wearing pyjamas (as they had escaped from the madhouse) and many other different colorful outfits. There were a lot of musicians, playing tarambukas (doubmeks), drums, kavals and other whistles. There were juggling clowns and skiers sking on the asphalt-paved streets. After a considerable crowd gathered, around 150-200 people, we all marched towards the Vitosha blvd. While we were crossing we blocked the crossroad between Patriarh Evtimii blvd and Vitosha. The first policemen started coming, but they did not try to stop us, because probably they did not know that the there was no permission for the protest. Down on the 'Vitosha' there was a lot of music, songs, dances and slogans like "the Earth is not for sale!" and "Capitalism kills the Earth!". The demo turned towards presidency. There everyone stopped and the musicians started to play very loud. A police officers started to ask around "who is the organizer", "why are you protesting". He tried to stop the players, but they went on playing. Now the cops understood that the protest was without a permission and the fact that we were self-organized confused them and they could not stop us. Then we continued the march through the "yellow stones"(the centre of Sofia is paved with yellow stones), towards the Parliament. And there were few police cars blocking our way and trying to stop us. After some arguments with the police they let us go, but stopped three of our friends. We waited for them and when they came we understood that they only had to sign a warning. We went on and reached the



Parliament. And there songs, dances and slogans. Great euphoria had grabbed everyone. We stood like ten minutes and decided to go on towards BNT (Bulgarian National Television). We already had a strong escort of few police cars who were carefully watching us. When we reached "San Stefano" we encountered the "order keepers" once again. This time though the boys in blue were determined to stop us. They told us that we do not have a permission to protest and that we had to leave without quietly. Of course noone liked the idea and we went on playing, singing and dancing, trying to reach BNT. At this moment the police uncovered their true face. They showed that they serve to the people, but not to the ordinary people, and only to the people with money. They started to push us down, but we

refused and we stayed where we were. This made them furious and they decided to show us their power and started to arrest people, probably provoking them with their colorful and beautiful outlooks and good mood. The pigs arrested four people in an extremely aggressive manner, they were pushing, hitting and dragging people. To show solidarity we all gathered and started shouting the names of the arrested, insisting them to be set free. The cops got very angry and started to kick and push some of us as strong as they could. One cop pulled one of our friends, who kept on telling them to let the arrested girls free as well as not to be so brutal and aggressive to us. But in the big mess that was all around we managed to pull our friend back out of the cop's clutch. We had to step back a little and we went on playing and shouting against the pigs. Then a police officer came and took the ID cards of three people. At this time there were threats that the arrested will be free when they stain the sheets in red(one of the arrested girls was dressed in a white sheet). This brilliant police thought was from someone who said he was "sergeant Zhechev". There was a series of similar threats and insults. They decided to scare us with tickets, arrests and police brutality. During the clash with the police there was one cop who was filming the faces of the protesters. About half an hour they were thinking what kind of tickets to write to the boys, whose ID cards they had taken. In the end they wrote a ticket for violation of the order in the society, because they were playing loud on musical instruments. After that the protesters started to walk away, but some went to make noise in front of the police station where the arrested people were held. They were set free soon after that. The arrested people were harassed and offended by the cops. They also got tickets for not obeying police order to step back. The whole demo went very good. There was a lot of noise and the protesters were able to grab lots of attention. We have to fight to the end for the things we love and value, no matter that we will be called crazy or terrorists or of the police terror against us. We do not need a permission for this. We will show no compromise in defending Mother Earth. She is not for sale and noone can own her! The Nature belongs to everyone – humans and animals! The struggle goes on!



Environmental Grassroots Protests in Bulgaria

In the last months the environmental movement in Bulgaria started to look something like the beginning of a movement indeed. There had been street blockades, big demonstrations and many other smaller and larger actions of various kinds throughout the country. We are using the word "movement", because all of a sudden different actions were organized from many different groups and individuals and the struggles went a bit out of the NGOs into a level that is more close to the grassroots forms of organizing, but still the whole thing was working close to the NGOs. It felt like all that increase in actions and all that came all of a sudden, but the truth is that what is going on now is a result of years of hard work behind. We will try to give a brief explanation of the processes that are going on here from our very subjective and somewhat anti-authoritarian perspective, so have in mind that there are many other opinions of what is going on here.

Now let's look of what has influenced the recent developments. In the last year – 2006 – there had been two large and somewhat successful campaigns that were coming not only from the NGOs, but from different grassroots initiatives as well.

What happened in Popinci?

For some years now there has been a project from one Canadian corporation for the creation of a cyanide gold mine near a village called Popinci. The people there have been resisting the project, because of various reasons. Mainly it is the understanding of the local people about that the large multinational company, that is trying to undertake the developmental project, would only use them as cheap labor in order to be able to exploit the gold in the mine as fast as possible, the natural environment in the area will be destroyed and there will be potential health problems for them and their children. There have been nearly identical cases in other countries (Rosia Montana in Romania for example) and the people in Bulgaria were very aware of them and thus of the results of similar developmental projects in other places. Speaking about the resistance it is good to know here that apart from the grassroots initiatives in Popinci and the other villages of the area, the struggle against the cyanide gold mine was supported from various environmental NGOs, individual activists (both Bulgarian as well as international) as well as from the local authorities. It is important to note that the vast majority of the local people were against the project, there was a local referendum and something like 97% voted against it.

When in July 2006, against the will of the people, in the region the project started its initial work about two hundred people went on a barricade to stop them, the state had send riot police (gendarmierie), which was not finally send to attack the blockade, but some people from the mafia did. There were some clashes with the "security" forces, and one person from the village was stabbed with knife almost to death after being on the blockade. The official police statement about the murder attempt is that he had committed attempt for suicide, because of private problems - a proof of the cooperation between the state, the police, the mafia and the investors. In the end, after 36 days of constant blockade the company went away and temporarily canceled the project.

The most recent update on the case that we have is that on 25th of April 2007 there was information that the company might be trying to start the project again. The people there once again seem to be ready to fight.

It is worthy to mention on the way the case was covered in the corporate media as well.

The same problem emerged in Rodopi Mountain, where the corporation Dundee Precious Metals wants to create another cyanide gold mine.

What happens with "Da Spasim Irakli" (To Save Irakli)?

The other big campaign last year was the case with "Da Spasim Irakli". While it might have not been as successful as the case with the mine in terms of its own goals, it has succeeded to a much great extend to influence the environmental movement in Bulgaria.

Irakli is a protected natural area next to one small village at the black sea coast. It is very popular because many alternative people use the beach there for "illegal" camping; it's still very preserved nature with many rare and "supposed to be protected by the state" species of both animals and plants. In the beginning of last year there was information that there is a project of the construction of a resort village near to the beach. Apart from that the beach is important for a lot of people who go camping there, most of the society in Bulgaria is very angry of what is going on in the seaside – overconstruction with huge hotels and resort areas, leading to destruction of environment and the impossibility of people to have a quiet and calm holidays between the huge concrete constructions.

"Da Spasim Irakli" (To Save Irakli) started as a grassroots initiative in the support of that beach, first spreading call-outs in the Internet, but pretty fast it grew to a very big campaign and a lot of people showed solidarity with and it became a symbol of environmental struggles and the anger of people. There were many kinds of actions and the people from the group "Da Spasim Irakli" managed to have a very successful PR campaign with the mass media and the struggle received a very strong and also positive to some extend mass media attention. The group is working closely with the environmental NGOs and many of the active people are actually working in some of them. That is why probably most of the people accepted the idea that in order to actually save Irakli their chance is to use the two directives of the European Union (Bulgaria became part of EU in 2007) forming the network of Natura2000 (I will brief that network below). The limited success in the struggle itself was that the State had freeze any developments in the area for an year and while people were hoping that this would be extended, very recently the State has removed the territories where the developmental project is to take place and the construction might soon begin as the company is already preparing. Probably the most extreme cases were when some private security forces had destroyed some small infrastructures (like little tables, benches, places for fire etc.) there, which had been made by the people who had been using the beach "illegally" throughout the years, and the other one is when the backpacks of some people who were camping there were burnt.

All of the building projects in Irakli are approved and soon will start. One of the projects is financed by AKB Forest, led by former member of the communist

regime.

I mentioned the EU Network NATURA2000 and that many activists (both NGO and grassroots) have accepted it as the only chance to protect the natural environment. But what is it briefly? It is basically a network that is supposed to exist in all EU member states consisting of protected territories, where the survivor of a certain part of some endangered species has to be observed and it is backed by two EU directives. The territories themselves had to be offered by experts from the NGOs and the state to approve them. Last year a large campaign started with the idea to back up the territories that had been proposed by the NGOs to the State and what happened in the end is that the State had accepted a much lower percentage than what the NGOs had expected. The effectiveness of NATURA2000 network could of course be arguable.

The case with Stranja in the summer of 2007

This is where most certainly everyone here felt a change. On 29 June the status of the natural park Stranja had been removed by the High Court Council, after the company that started the trial – “Crash2000” – won the trial it had started few months before. Natural Park Stranja is may be the one with the most wildlife and preserved natural environment here so it was not unexpected that people got so angry. Very soon after the news different protests in different cities took place. The first 3 of them were the so called “flash mobs”. On the second protest about 400 people blockaded the main crossroad in the capital Sofia for 30-40 minutes. 35 people were arrested. Different actions went on throughout all the country for some weeks, and even there were no more blockades, many of the actions were “without permit”, which here is considered a bit as a revolutionary act. The number of actions for such a short time, the fact that they were happening everywhere in the country as well as the way they were organized, was something that was unseen here after (and surely at the times of) the bolshevist dictatorship. This campaign managed to cause some pressure towards the state and in the end there was a decision by the Parliament that lead to the “return” of the status of Natural Park Stranja. This was very inspiring for people as they saw a direct effect of their actions, but still that was no victory first because on the way that it was made – the law the Parliament passed is very arguable – as well as that now the situation with the illegal construction of the hotel by “Crash2000” is just what it used to be two months ago. Still people went on passed that and accepted their struggle as a struggle for the entire natural environment in Bulgaria. On the day of the decision of the Parliament there was probably one of the biggest demonstrations in the recent history of Bulgaria, which was organized without the involvement of any of the authoritarian structures, where more than 2000 marched in Sofia to say “Nature, Not Concrete”. The struggle is really going towards a direction of expansion in order to be able to cover all the environmental and nature preserving topics on a nation-wide level.

There are a lot of other and even bigger building projects (“Super Borovetz” and “Panichishte” in Rila Mountain). The investors here are also big corporations, which come from off-shore zones and work with local capitalists with totalitarian past. The protests against them already started – on 29th of August another crossroad was blocked for an hour. One person with his two dogs was arrested for no reason.

What is the position of the anarchists in all this?

(No "official" position, but collectives such as "Katarzis", autonomous anti-authoritarian group "AnarhoSaprotiva", "Ecotopia" infoshop in Razgrad, who try to work closely together very positive, trying to help with little things and to show solidarity.)

Certainly there are lots of people with different forms of horizontal views within the movement, but we have to acknowledge the fact that it is not the only case. There have been talks about the formation of a new political party by some of the NGO leaders (they see it as a way to make a change), some people were speaking on behalf of the movement etc. But at the moment there is no open conflict between views and they coexist together as people are trying to find solutions. In its roots this movement is from below, even though the thinking of most of the people involved is not so radical.

The movement has also some problems. Nationalistic leaders are trying to get the topic as their own just to gain publicity. The depolarization of politics is another problem - a lot of people from the eco-movement define themselves as apolitical, turn quite easily to simplistic right wing solutions ("free market" promises, EU savior or nationalistic nonsense) and try to find solutions within the capitalist system.

Environmental problems are more than what people could cover, so the only way to succeed would be when the movement understands that it has to be part of a wider movement of the struggle against capitalism. Within the environmental movement are also some hierarchical, tied with the authority NGOs, funded by corporations.

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Do It Yourself – Create Anarchy

We have been using the slogan DIY (do it yourself) more often recently and we try to act according to its ethics. We wrote this text to say simply what DIY means to us. We remember that during our childhood we had moments when we used to show creativity and we had made things by ourselves. When we were growing up we have started to feel that the system tries to limit and specialize us in doing one single thing. We have been pushed to get in the proper high school by our parents and teachers since the elementary, then they have pushed us to choose and get into the proper university, so we could become specialists in the field “we had been chosen”. Of course, exceptions always exist and it's wonderful to do and work something you like, but few people have this luck and opportunity. And now we get to the moment where there are a lot of specialists on different issues, that understand only one specialized thing. So what are you going to do if you need to do something, but you are not much familiarized with it? Are you going to call the proper specialist or you are going to do the thing by yourself? There is nothing more inspiring than seeing that the result from your efforts is successful. So instead of wasting your money on various specialist, it's better if you read some books with practical tips or just consult your friends and do the thing by yourself. DIY gives freedom to your imagination and develops your creativity and skills. You can start with preparing your own dinner instead of going to restaurants, you could make your own designed badges, patches and t-shirts instead of buying such, you could publish and distribute music albums and start organizing non-commercial concerts without looking for sponsors which are only interested in advertising and selling their shitty products, you could also learn making

furniture and building houses... The sky is the limit. And why not trying to organize your whole life according to this principle? May be one day you will create an anarchist eco farm, growing your own food and making your own clothes, so you could be for an example and will give inspiration to other people that could get enthusiastic, so you can create a network of autonomous and self-sufficient anarchist communities that help each other. DIY is striving for independence and self-sufficiency – a step forward the way of freedom. The whole idea is to take control of our life, to take it back in our hands, so we could decide for ourselves. Fuck all specialists, bosses and politicians. We don't need them, because helping each other we could achieve whatever we want to.



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